

COMMUNITY PLANNING NEWS

The Economics of Urban Growth

In the last (September) issue of our sister journal, the **COMMUNITY PLANNING REVIEW**, we quoted the remarks of Mr. Walter L. Gordon, Chairman of the Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects, inviting those concerned with problems of urban development to submit Briefs to the Commission.

In this issue of the **NEWS**, we reproduce three such Briefs prepared by Divisions of our Association—those of British Columbia, Alberta and Manitoba.

The British Columbia CPAC Brief deals with the effect of urban growth on agricultural land and the impact on the community as a whole of the loss of such land. It reviews the situation which has developed in several areas of British Columbia where residential and industrial uses are replacing a large production of fruit, vegetables and dairy products. The Brief proposes a number of carefully-considered measures which might be taken to preserve agricultural land without impeding essential urban growth.

The Alberta Division Brief presents answers—in terms of the situation in that Province—to each of the questions put to the municipalities by Mr. Gordon in his Edmonton address of August 29th: (1) the factors making for population growth in the Calgary and Edmonton areas, and the factors making for decline; (2) the location of industry (will more efficient environments result from concentration of population or from dispersion?); (3) measures needed to redevelop existing depressed areas; (4) the pattern of city growth (will there be a shift to multiple housing in central areas—a building up instead of out?); (5) recreational needs, resulting particularly from the shortening of the working week; (6) traffic problems; (7) the question of the adequacy of the financial and administrative resources of the municipalities to handle their increased responsibilities resulting from urban growth.

The Brief of the Manitoba Division reflects the growing concern in that Province regarding the economic waste and inconvenience resulting from unplanned urban development. Reference is made to the need for technical assistance in town planning, especially for the smaller cities and towns. Quoting from the "Carrothers report" (summarized in our September **COMMUNITY PLANNING REVIEW**), the Brief states that "towns and municipalities are finding themselves encumbered by the lack of zoning, mixed land use, fringe and ribbon development, and by the ever-increasing financial burden of supplying and maintaining essential services".

The three Briefs are printed in full in the following pages.

A Brief to the Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects, from the British Columbia Division of the Community Planning Association of Canada

The British Columbia Division of the Community Planning Association of Canada since its inception in 1947 has had as its objective the fostering of public understanding of, and participation in, town and regional (community) planning. Other divisions of our Association across Canada will be submitting briefs covering various planning problems. Here in British Columbia our Association wishes to place before the Commission its concern with the urban growth on agricultural land and the impact such loss of farm land has on the Community.

Much of the area of British Columbia topographically and in the north climatically is not suited to agriculture. We have an average of one cultivated acre per person in British Columbia. Our population has increased remarkably but our area of cultivated land has not expanded at the same rate. Dr. J. Lewis Robinson, Department of Geology and Geography, University of British Columbia, in speaking at a Community Planning Conference, pointed out that in 1900 British Columbia had a population of 170,000 persons and had 500,000 acres of cultivated land—about three acres per person. Today we have a population of about 1,500,000 and about 1,250,000 cultivated acres—about one acre per person. It is true that we are not using all of our arable land. Estimates state that we have from 7,000,000 to 9,000,000 acres of arable land in British Columbia—but this information, gathered from official sources, does not tell us where the land is located. In truth, most of it is far away from markets in Central British Columbia and, although it may be classed as arable, much of it is not economic. The rate of bringing arable land under new cultivation is slow; while some of the older farming areas are actually being taken out of production.

Residential settlement on the excellent agricultural land of the Fraser Valley delta is continuing. Every year, 100 to 200 acres of dairy or truck garden land is withdrawn from production on Lulu Island alone. Already, Vancouver's agricultural hinterland in the Fraser Valley cannot supply sufficient food for the urban metropolis; and yet we continue to allow agricultural land to go out of production, and therefore increase our food costs. There can be little said in favour of this trend, in terms of the space needed for productive commercial or industrial workers, since large empty areas of non-productive, coarse glacial soils still exist in Greater Vancouver. Greater Vancouver is, therefore, not using its land properly. On a regional basis, housing should go on non-productive land, leaving where possible the good soil to feed the growing population.

On a smaller scale one can see the same trend appearing around Chilliwack, near the eastern end of the Lower Fraser Valley, and in Saanich Peninsula, north of Victoria. Urban pressure on the land is resulting in farm land becoming residential area, and large dairy farms are being broken up into smaller, and frequently less efficient, farms. In the Okanagan Valley the same trends are also apparent. The conflict in land use is already quite apparent in

Penticton. As that City expands into the upper benches, fruit farms are subdivided and agricultural land becomes non-productive. Other centres such as Kelowna and Kamloops are rapidly encroaching upon agricultural land—and yet these same fruit lands are basic to the economy of the Community.

In the Saanich Peninsula these same problems of conflicting land use are already upon us. Vancouver Island has very little good agricultural land—only about one-fifth of the total area of the southeastern strip of the Island is classed as arable. One of the largest blocks of good land is in the Saanich Peninsula. This region is also a desirable place for residential settlement. Although population has increased steadily, arable land is limited. Already agriculture, in this summer drought region, is also competing with residential users for the limited supplies of ground water.

On southern Vancouver Island, the Lower Mainland Region, and the Okanagan Valley—British Columbia's three most intensively used agricultural areas—we have permitted community growth to expand haphazardly onto our best accessible agricultural lands. Virtually all new agricultural acreage is in the central part of the province, where soils are poorer, climate is more uncertain and transportation costs are high. On the other hand, the acreage going out of production is on some of the best soil of the Province, with a good climate and near to markets.

If we want people to move into the potential agricultural areas of central and northern British Columbia we first must know more about the land. We cannot afford to waste settlers and their time and capital by placing them on poor land, as has happened so often in Canada before World War II. And yet, what fundamental planning are we doing for agricultural settlement in British Columbia? As yet we do not have more than a sampling of essential fundamental soil surveys. And in 1952 the Land Utilization Survey which was classifying land for future settlement, was abolished as an economy measure!

This trend towards declining agricultural opportunities near our cities might be excused if all of the available residential land in southwestern British Columbia were already occupied. It is not, however. On Saanich Peninsula, and in the Lower Fraser Valley we have a variety of soils, owing to a rather complex geological history of emergence since the Glacial Age. It would seem desirable therefore, in whatever planning is done for the region, that the good soils be saved for agriculture and the poor soils be used for residential, or other purposes.

Southern British Columbia has reached the stage where there are alternative demands for land area. In the Okanagan it is apparent that already residential uses have pushed back the orchard areas. On Lulu Island good dairy farms are being subdivided into less productive small holdings and residences. Such encroachment is possible for a time, as long as there is other land available further back which will produce more crops. However, geographically,

neither the Okanagan nor the Lower Fraser Valley nor Saanich have unlimited agricultural hinterlands. Every new residential subdivision will take land out of production—land upon which many residences actually are dependent, in terms of the owner's livelihood. Obviously, we cannot have our cake and eat it too. There is a limit to the population which the agricultural resources of this region can support—these limits are environmental. Unless we wish to continue to pay more and more for food as we import it from farther and farther away, we must implement regional land-use planning.

Agricultural land lying close to the larger urban centres possesses values over and beyond the purely monetary returns from it. It assures the community of a supply of fresh milk and vegetables at low transportation costs. In an emergency a supply of foodstuffs not dependent on vulnerable lines of transportation may be a valuable safeguard. An economy based largely on the extractive industries and the processing of their product is more vulnerable to changes in economic conditions than one which also has a foot firmly planted in the soil.

The Report of *The British Columbia Royal Commission on Milk* discusses at some length this rapid loss of agricultural land. On page 18 of the Report, the Commission states:

"Nature has endowed this Province with ample land which is completely useless and unproductive from an agricultural point of view but which is entirely adequate and valuable for the building of factories and houses and there is plenty of that land available in the immediate vicinity of Vancouver. Thus it is distressing from an economic point of view to see some of the finest agricultural land in the world being used for low cost housing development when there are equally good building-sites equally close at hand."

Perhaps more important still, agricultural land may serve as desirable open space or green belt to break the continuous urban sprawl which characterizes too many of our metropolitan communities. Such open spaces, unlike our public parks, cost the community nothing to maintain, but bring the amenities of the countryside within easy reach of the town dweller.

There are a number of measures which may be taken to preserve agricultural land:

(1) The introduction of a system of agricultural zoning through minimum acreage subdivision requirements would tend to stabilize land uses and encourage investment in permanent improvements to the land.

Zoning might follow a system of land classification based on soil characteristics as is done in certain counties in California.

Farmers would be encouraged to accept such zoning provisions, if agricultural land, zoned as such, were relieved of some of the tax burden at present imposed on it. We have come to accept the principle that residential, commercial and industrial land should be zoned to protect it from encroachment, but few communities have bothered to protect farm land. Although zoning would prevent the subdivision of certain agricultural land, the farm owners would simply be on a par with the city homeowners who cannot at random tear down houses and build, say, stores. We believe, and people have accepted, that individual rights must operate within a pattern designed to benefit the broader interests of the community.

(2) High taxation of agricultural land, resulting very largely from the necessity of financing costly urban services for adjacent residential developments, puts an unwarranted burden on the farmer and makes it difficult for him to resist attractive offers from subdividers.

Recent studies in the Fraser Valley indicate that agricultural land pays taxes at a rate considerably in excess of the value of the services rendered to it, the school tax representing a particularly heavy burden. Heavy taxation, by depressing the price of agricultural land below its true value, also reduces the differential in price between good and poor land and encourages the use of the land which is cheapest to develop, irrespective of its agricultural quality.

The system of assessing and taxing agricultural land should, it is submitted, be reviewed and the weight of taxation related directly to the benefits actually received by the land in terms of roads and other services, the farmer's house being assessed separately on a residential unit.

Some of the land may then be saved from residential subdivision by maintaining low assessment rates as long as the land remains in good production.

(3) Where, owing to increments in value brought about by growing urbanization, it appears likely to be difficult to maintain an agricultural zoning classification, the community might consider acquiring strategically located properties before the values have risen too far, and leasing them for farming purposes.

(4) More effective controls are required over new land development schemes to prevent premature subdivision. Sporadic speculative development often takes large areas of land out of effective cultivation many years before their actual need as sites for housing or other urban uses.

(5) A tremendous waste of land, and of the services associated with urban land use, has followed from our current practice of allowing excessively wide-spread communities to grow up; from the unnecessary widths of street required by some municipalities and from redundant lanes. This inefficiency can be overcome by the recognition on the part of municipal governments of contemporary town planning techniques.

(6) The breaking down of large farms into uneconomic agricultural units has been a further factor in reducing productivity. The Veterans Land Act, by establishing subdivisions with a minimum lot size too big for convenient residential occupancy and too small for effective farming, has contributed to this situation. A considerable amount of private land has also been subdivided into holdings which are probably below an economic size in times of low agricultural prices. Zoning limitations on minimum lot sizes, related to the type of agriculture suitable for the area, would assist in preventing the abandonment or neglect of marginal farms.

(7) If lands unfit for agriculture but suitable for residential and other building purposes were serviced in anticipation of requirement, the developer would be attracted to such land, thus leaving the farm land in production. Municipalities should take positive steps to clear and service such land, through Section 36 of the National Housing Act or through their own resources.

(8) Few, if any, of the measures proposed will be put into effect if they have to depend for their adoption on the decisions of individual suburban municipalities acting independently of each other, since the apparent interest of each individual municipality will not necessarily coin-

cide with that of the area as a whole. Even when these interests do coincide, the required measures will often not be put into effect owing to the opposition of local vested interests.

The desirability of planning on a metropolitan or regional basis requires no elaboration since it is obvious that few major urban services can be planned effectively on a piece-meal basis. Past experience has taught, however, that it is too much to expect a number of autonomous municipalities, jealous of their own rights and interests, to co-operate effectively in executing a metropolitan plan.

Unless, therefore, the provincial government is prepared to step in at the request of a reasonable proportion

Much of the information contained in this Brief stems from various talks given at Community Planning Association Conferences by Dr. J. Lewis Robinson, of the Department of Geology and Geography, University of British Columbia, and is used with his kind permission.

of municipalities or voters and set up a supra-municipal authority for the administration of the principal urban services in metropolitan or regional areas, any really effective planning for the best use of our land resource is unlikely to be achieved.

It is not suggested that all agricultural land should be withheld indefinitely from residential or other uses. We recognize that people have to sleep and work, as well as to eat. Our submission is that while there is other land available for these functions agricultural land should not be sacrificed. What is required is effective planning, based on accurate knowledge of our land resources and our community needs. Let us use the right land for the right purpose! In British Columbia we have a lot of poor land suitable for urbanization; let us keep our limited arable land producing food.

Respectfully submitted,

W. T. LANE,

Chairman, British Columbia Division,
Community Planning Association of Canada

Brief of the Manitoba Division of the CPAC to the Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects

November 14, 1955.

The Manitoba Division of the Community Planning Association of Canada was formed in 1947 with the objective of promoting within this Province the prime aim of the Association—namely, to develop and to maintain public interest in community planning.

We understand that one of the terms of reference of the Commission is to enquire into the requirements of our population, in terms of physical assets such as roads, houses, schools, hospitals. We are taking for granted that members of the Commission know that "planning" these various physical assets in relation one to the other is a necessary measure—because uncontrolled or unplanned development must inevitably result in ineffective use of land, with corresponding inconvenience and discomfort to the residents of the community—in some instances, a growth of blighted areas—and in many instances also, increasing costs for municipal services.

As a result of our eight years' experience in endeavouring to further the cause of TOWN PLANNING, we have reached three general conclusions;

1. All cities and towns of any size in Manitoba, except municipalities within the Greater Winnipeg area, are in need of technical Town Planning assistance.
2. A considerable number of municipal officials and citizens in these towns realize the wisdom and necessity of originating and carrying out a sound and progressive "Town Plan".
3. Unless the Government of Manitoba establishes a Provincial Planning agency to provide technical assistance to these towns, the need for such assistance cannot be met—due to the lack of trained profes-

sional planning personnel in private practice in Manitoba.

1. Our Division's first conclusion is borne out by the findings in what is referred to as the Carrothers Report, which was a research project established under the sponsorship of the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation of Canada and the Provincial Government of Manitoba and carried out under the direction of the University of Manitoba in 1954. This report indicates that "Manitoba communities are headed toward the standard pattern of blighted areas and slum conditions. This is becoming more and more evident as the number of towns and municipalities seeking guidance and advice increases; but unfortunately, there is no established form of planning authority to whom they can turn in Manitoba."

"Towns and municipalities are finding themselves encumbered by the lack of zoning, mixed land use, fringe and ribbon development, and by the ever-increasing financial burden of supplying and maintaining essential services."

2. Our second general conclusion is based on correspondence which our Division has had with many municipal officials and citizens—personal interviews with them—editorials or articles published in their towns' weekly newspapers. These interviews, letters and editorials show a positive understanding of the need to plan their towns, and a desire to do something about it.

3. Our third conclusion is based on the fact that most of the municipalities have not the financial resources available to engage professional planning authorities. From time to time our Division has been able, largely through the courtesy of the Metropolitan Planning Commission

of Greater Winnipeg, to give technical assistance of a limited nature to municipalities which requested this assistance. But in most cases we have been unable to meet such requests, and furthermore we have not been able to refer them to anybody for assistance.

This latter statement points up the lack of qualified planners in private practice or available for municipal positions, not only in Manitoba, but throughout Canada. There is a very urgent need for more qualified planners—and this need is, to a very large extent, a direct result of the haphazard growth of our communities which is forcing them to seek the technical knowledge of trained planning personnel, either to rectify past errors or to plan for future developments.

The following factors merit consideration.

(1) In common with most other Provinces, rural population in Manitoba has been showing a decrease, with a corresponding increase in population in cities and towns: this increase calls for careful planning of existing facilities and for the future use of urban land.

(2) To date there has been a tendency for retired citizens to leave their communities and take up residence in other parts of Canada, sometimes in the United States. It is suggested that if our communities were more attractively planned, these retired citizens would be content to remain in their "home towns". We would benefit from the presence of these mature minds, and our smaller communities would attain a better balance in their social structures.

(3) We believe that some consideration should be given to the apparent over-concentration of the urban development in certain metropolitan areas. In Manitoba this is exemplified by the concentration of business and industry in the Greater Winnipeg area. There appears to be a need for assistance to some of the smaller communities in order that they may provide themselves with the necessary facilities and improvements in amenities which will make them sufficiently attractive to industry and business and to their employees, and thus create a better balance of economic development in the interests of the country as a whole.

(4) There is some question as to whether isolated communities, typical of mining developments, are being constructed with a sufficiently permanent character to create a sound influence on the people who live there and who bring up whole generations of Canadian children in such communities. Care should be taken that such towns are not built on a temporary camp basis with all of the inferior characteristics which this generates in the physical facilities of a community and in the resultant attitude of its people toward the place in which they live.

It would appear therefore, that as far as Manitoba is concerned, among the other requirements of an increasing population in our cities and towns, are adequate and efficient "town plans" and trained personnel to prepare and direct these plans.

We understand that with the exception of Nova Scotia, Manitoba is the only province in Canada which has not a provincial planning office available for the purpose of providing technical assistance to municipalities. It may interest the Commission to know that the setting up of such an Office was recommended by a special commission appointed by the Manitoba Government in 1953 to enquire into Provincial-Municipal relations; resolutions urging the creation of a provincial planning office have been passed by the Manitoba Urban Municipal Association and by the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce: our Division of the Community Planning Association has also urged this step. Furthermore a resolution urging the Manitoba Government to take this step is to be presented at the annual convention of the Union of Manitoba Municipalities, meeting in Winnipeg next week, November 21 to 25.

The Manitoba Division of the Community Planning Association of Canada therefore respectfully suggests that Town Planning is a subject which merits the Commission's consideration in its task of appraising Canada's future Economic Prospects.

Respectfully submitted,

L. E. OSTRANDER, *Chairman.*

Brief of the Alberta Division of the Community Planning Association of Canada to the Royal Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects

The Alberta Division of the Community Planning Association of Canada has an entirely voluntary membership, actively engaged in other work, and no research staff. For this reason we have not been able to prepare in the time available a carefully documented brief, and have chosen simply to present our views on some of the questions raised by the Chairman of your Commission in his address here in Edmonton on August 29th. Wherever studies have been made in this Province on these questions, a reference will be made to them, and they will be appended to our submission.

1. POPULATION GROWTH

"Do the municipalities expect their cities to continue to grow at the same rapid pace as they have done during the past ten years?"

From our knowledge of the economies of the Edmonton and Calgary areas we believe that certain factors operate in the direction of maintaining their high rate of growth and others operate in the other direction.

High growth factors are the following:

(a) The natural evolution of industry from primary to secondary and consumer goods industries.

There is some evidence in the last year or two that

the Edmonton region, at least, is beginning to go beyond the primary stage, e.g. the recent announcement of our first factory using C.I.L. polythene flakes to produce plastic sheet, the first plywood plant, the first glass factory, et cetera. If this continues, we will be getting industries in which the labor/capital ratio is much higher than that of the typical primary industries in this area, and therefore every dollar of investment will represent more employment and more population than it has to the present.

(b) An age structure in our urban population heavily weighted towards the younger groups giving promise of a high rate of natural increase.

(c) Increasing electrification and mechanization of agriculture that will increase the productivity of labour on the farm and release some rural population which will find its way, in part, to the cities and towns of Alberta.

(d) The cumulative or agglomerating effect of population growth.

Population is itself a factor leading to growth. It happens that primary industrial development in the major cities has been on a large enough scale to build up substantial local markets, which in turn may prove an inducement to the location of consumer goods and service industries. In this process the specific impact of the freight-rate structure is of prime importance—in the way it creates sheltered local markets for different goods, and in the differentials established between rates on materials and finished products, e.g. sheet steel and refrigerators.

Factors working towards population decline are:

(a) To the extent that the present rate of growth has been based on the exploitation of oil and gas resources, the full development of known fields will lessen the population effects of the oil industry on our cities.

There is a natural cycle of development in the oil industry going from the stage of exploration, drilling and development to production and maintenance. In the maintenance stage, employment is lower and demands for services and equipment are less. Consequently the urban manifestations of oil field development, e.g. technical services, pipe and drilling firms, equipment and supply, etc., will decline.

(b) The possibility that industrial development will not go much beyond the primary stage, because of the distance from sources of iron and steel.

(c) The migration of population from our cities if economic opportunities do not keep pace with the natural increase of the population.

A large proportion of the population of our major cities have come in the last decade in response to economic opportunities and have not yet built up deep attachments to their new homes. Because the population is young and mobile, because the cities themselves are young and not fully developed in a physical, social and cultural sense, and because of limitations of climate and site, the people of these cities are likely to move on if economic growth does not continue.

It is, of course, not possible to determine precisely the effect of these positive and negative factors, but the present tendencies indicate that the cities of Calgary and Edmonton at least, will continue to have, if not as high

a rate of growth as in the past 10 years, at least a rate as high as the national average for urban centres. With the population levels already quite high, even this lower rate would produce substantial absolute increases each year.

2. THE LOCATION OF INDUSTRY

“Would it be better to try to encourage industry to decentralize?”

We have considered this question in two different contexts—in the context of city-centered regions, and in the context of the Province as a whole.

Industry is the major generator of urban land uses and so, in the second context, the question posed becomes, from our viewpoint reformulated, as follows:

Will more efficient and satisfying environments result from the further concentration of industry and population in our large centres, or from the dispersion of some of the expected industry to smaller centres?

There is much to suggest in the history of urban development that size is one of the factors determining the cost and quality of life in cities and towns. It can be demonstrated that the per capita cost of government increases as the size of cities increase, that problems of traffic, parking, housing supply and of integrating the functional parts of communities are intensified as cities grow. From these facts has emerged the double-edged concept of optimum growth, implying on the one hand an attempt to define, and to implement by a greenbelt, a limit to the physical extension of the city, and on the other hand, an attempt to locate industry and encourage new towns on favourable outlying sites within the city-centered region. For a fuller account of this concept we refer you to the following appended studies:

- (a) Final Brief, Edmonton District Planning Commission to Royal Commission on Metropolitan Development
- (b) A General Plan for the Town of Fort Saskatchewan (Edmonton District Planning Commission)
- (c) A General Plan for the Town of Leduc (Edmonton District Planning Commission).

From the viewpoint of the Province, as a whole, we favour decentralization of industry because it is both a means of diversifying and strengthening local economies, and of equalizing, through the broadening of the tax base, urban facilities and services throughout the Province. We do not, however, hold any brief for “forced” industrial location, at sites which do not meet the locational requirements of any industry.

3. URBAN REDEVELOPMENT

“What action needs to be taken to redevelop existing depressed or slum areas in our cities?”

We wish to bring to the attention of the Royal Commission certain special features of the blighted areas in the cities of Alberta. While there are blighted areas in the limits of the central business district, in conformity with the typical pattern of the older eastern cities, congestion and physical deterioration in these areas has not gone as far as in, say, Montreal or Toronto. This is due, in part, to the nature of the original dwellings, which were mainly single-family, and in part to the use of these areas by a steady stream of new immigrants, whose rents provide revenue and make possible a certain amount of

repair and maintenance on old houses. There is the additional effect of the horizontal spread of central business districts due to the sheer growth of the area as a whole, and to the limits on vertical expansion in the form of skyscrapers, because of proximity to airports. As a result there has been a steady conversion of the fringes of the blighted areas to business developments of high quality.

A second feature of urban blight in this province is the widespread occurrence of fringe slums, arising out of the spilling over of urban development beyond city and town limits in the years before the establishment of a province-wide system of town and rural planning. While population densities in these areas are not high, by slum standards, they contain a large backlog of extremely substandard housing and substandard community facilities and services. These areas, we believe, deserve as much attention in the way of rehabilitation and redevelopment as the central slum areas. For an account of conditions in the fringe communities we are appending a report prepared for the Community Planning Association by Prof. B. Y. Card of the University of Alberta.

4. PATTERN OF CITY GROWTH

"Will the limits of our cities continue to be pushed outwards with the building of single unit suburban housing, or will there be a shift to multiple housing in the central areas—a building up instead of out?"

The extent to which cities in Alberta will push outwards will depend upon:

(a) The age structure of the population.

There seems to be a persistent consumer preference amongst young families with children to live in a detached house on a lot of generous proportions, if possible. This is no doubt due to the space requirements, inside and out, of child rearing. It may also be due to the rural background of city dwellers.

(b) The degree of effectiveness of planning administration.

The pressure of land values within urban limits creates a tendency to push certain uses, notably commercial and industrial, to the fringes of the built-up areas. This occurs even when there are, as in Edmonton and Calgary, large tracts of suitable land zoned for these purposes within city and town limits. If these fugitive uses are allowed to pile up then they will generate a demand for housing close by, and suburban development will be extended by default.

The building of multiple housing in central areas will be determined by:

(a) The amount of financial assistance for clearance and redevelopment from senior governments.

(b) The extent to which assessment and taxation is correlated with zoning.

If in the areas designated in a general plan as suitable for redevelopment in multiple housing, the assessment is brought into line and not maintained say at a commercial level, then land prices will conform to land use and acquisition costs will be reduced. A major obstacle to redevelopment will be minimized.

(c) The particular pattern of growth towards which our cities are striving.

If, for example, in the Edmonton area we are successful in achieving an optimum size and in accommodating part of the demand for single-unit housing in new satellite centres, then for a number of reasons redevelopment of central blighted areas will be stimulated. First, if growth is limited on the fringe, developers will turn their attention to the rebuilding of central areas. Secondly, as the optimum of the central city is approached, and population is distributed throughout the region, the quantitative demands will decline (i.e. the demand for roads and sewer and water lines in new areas), and the city will accumulate capital or credit which can be devoted to quantitative investment—the improvement of conditions in the older areas through redevelopment.

The questions raised by the Chairman of the Royal Commission suggest a concern for the quality of the urban environments that will be created. From that viewpoint, the unlimited extension of suburban development raises basic questions about its effect on the urban community as a whole. Given our present habits and preferences in the way of housing, we must recognize that there will be, for a long time, a considerable diversity in housing demand, based on age, income, and location of employment. In this light, central multiple housing cannot be considered as a complete alternative to single-unit suburban housing. If we are concerned about the effects of suburban development, then we must give consideration to our basic goals in city and town development, and to the forces which determine the overall pattern of urban development, particularly to the location of industry.

We are appending for your reference a projection of the housing needs of the city of Calgary, prepared by the Calgary District Planning Commission.

5. RECREATIONAL NEEDS

"With the reducing length of the working week, what will be the requirements of the population—and particularly of the urban population—for their leisure time?"

We can visualize a number of tendencies and needs arising out of the expansion of leisure time, particularly if it takes the form of a long weekend:

(a) City dwellers will not want simply more of what they already have, e.g. community centres, sports fields, museums, etc., but we may expect an actual change in the demand for recreational facilities. For one thing, recreation may become more country-oriented; with longer weekends there will be a tendency for interest in and enjoyment of the countryside to grow, and municipalities will have to think of providing recreation on a regional scale at the sites of lakes, along streams, etc. Rural municipalities may be faced with the accommodation of a great expansion in summer cottage development.

(b) With more leisure time, home ownership will increase.

The greater scope for pursuing hobbies, craft and artistic interests in a home of one's own, will increase the interest in home ownership. Or alternatively, there will be a demand for recreational facilities attached to apartment and other forms of multiple housing development.

(c) There will be a greater tendency to supplement income by outside employment, or by living on agricultural small-holdings.

The interest in settling near the city on arable land that may be cultivated if necessary is already evident in the Edmonton and Calgary areas. With a shorter working week the opportunity for giving proper attention to horticultural activities will certainly increase and with it the opportunities for supplementary income. The extension of small-holding development will affect traffic patterns, and will create problems of servicing and finance for rural municipalities. Some conception of the impact of small-holdings is given in a report by the Edmonton District Planning Commission here appended.

(d) Traffic volumes on highways will increase.

6. TRAFFIC PROBLEMS

"How do the municipal authorities expect to cope with the increasing traffic problem?"

We wish to emphasize here that our traffic problem is a product of the relationship of land uses in the city. As a consequence, basic solutions to the problems are to be sought, not in the multiplication of mechanical devices (which although necessary now are a symbol of failure), but in the creation of proper relationships between the functional parts of the city. Since peak traffic movements arise primarily out of the journey to and from work, much can be done to relieve the traffic problem if housing accommodation in the vicinity of localities of employment bears a close relationship, in terms of cost and size, to the needs of the employee group. Carried out consistently, as an aspect of sound community planning, over the whole urbanized area, in new development and redevelopment, this approach would eventually result in a considerable reduction in the time, cost, inconvenience and annoyance of work travel. Similar beneficial results would arise from co-ordinating the location of closely related industries.

For a fuller discussion of this problem we have appended a study prepared by the City of Edmonton and the Edmonton District Planning Commission, under the title *The Journey to Work, Metropolitan Area of Edmonton*.

Coping adequately with the increasing traffic problem will call for, as well, a systematic rationalization of the road system to accommodate all major traffic movements. This will call for a "limited access" arterial road system, completely separated from local roads and designed for large volumes of traffic. In the Edmonton and Calgary areas, for example, where the urban areas are roughly circular in shape, this system has taken the form of a network of ring and radial roads. The completion of the outer ring road systems alone will bring an incalculable improvement in traffic conditions by providing a means for people and goods to move around the metropolitan area without congesting cross-city roads, by easing the load on central bridges by providing a by-pass route for highway traffic, and by making possible the strategic location of uses generated by the highway, e.g. trucking and truck freight terminals, along the route of the road.

For a study of the parking problem in Edmonton, we refer you to the report on *Downtown Parking Survey, 1952*, published by the Town Planning Department, City of Edmonton.

7. MUNICIPAL FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

(a) "Are the financial resources of the municipalities adequate to provide the kind of services that quite obviously are going to be needed?"

While the financial capacities of the urban municipalities in Alberta, as elsewhere, will depend to a great extent on the nature of their revenue sources, their economic position will significantly be affected by the way in which they are developed. There is no doubt, for example, that the financial problems of Calgary and Edmonton are in some part due to an extensive post-war development on the basis of 4 or 5 single-family dwellings to the acre. Each taxpayer has had to pay for his space and for a low-density development. Because higher densities would result in lower municipal costs there is a great need for some qualified National agency to experiment in the different forms of housing accommodation.

(b) "Will the municipalities be able to develop the kind of administrative organizations and the personnel that will be needed to handle their increased responsibilities?"

It is our opinion that many of the major responsibilities of the municipalities, as presently constituted will, in the future, be beyond their scope; e.g. how can a city provide new housing for people displaced from cleared areas if all the suitable building land is outside its limits? How can a city provide recreational facilities on a regional scale? How can a city provide a ring road, essential to the efficiency of its traffic system, if the best location of the road traverses many political jurisdictions? How can a city maintain orderly and economic growth if development beyond its limit seriously affects its ultimate size and shape, the volume of its traffic movements, and the structure of its land uses? How can a municipality pressed for revenue-bearing assessment honestly decide whether it would be better for industry to decentralize?

These questions suggest that, in the period ahead, many of the basic responsibilities of urban municipalities will be on the one hand, beyond their financial capacity, and, on the other, will have repercussions, when they are met, which go far beyond municipal boundaries. For this reason, it appears to us that two of the great national tasks of the next quarter-century must be:

- (1) The reorganization of local government in such a manner that the major development problems of city-centered regions can be more adequately solved, administratively and financially.
- (2) The development of an approach to urban problems, at provincial and national levels of government, consistent with the pronounced shift of our population to cities and towns, so that, in time, these governments may contribute as much to sound urban growth, as our Departments of Agriculture have contributed to the conservation and right use of arable land.

The Alberta Division of the Community Planning Association wholeheartedly supports the purposes of the Royal Commission, and is prepared to extend its assistance to the Commission and its staff in their future studies of conditions and prospects in the Province of Alberta.

Respectfully submitted,

COMMUNITY PLANNING ASSOCIATION OF CANADA
Alberta Division

National Housing Act

Proposals Relating to the National Housing Act Submitted to the Minister of Public Works by the Vancouver Housing Association, September 1955.

N.H.A. FINANCING OF EXISTING HOUSES

It has been suggested that, in view of the increased availability of mortgage funds, N.H.A. financing might be extended to existing houses. Our Association strongly supports this proposal as a measure to maintain building activity through the extension of home ownership should construction fall off. By reducing the large down payment which is now normally required on the purchase of existing houses, a further considerable segment of moderate income families would be enabled to undertake the purchase of homes. This in turn would facilitate the disposal by prospective new home purchasers of their existing homes and indirectly stimulate new building.

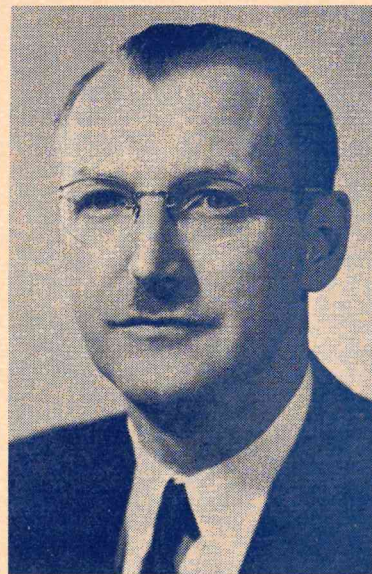
HOUSING FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

If senior citizens' housing is built by the senior levels of government under Section 36 of the National Housing Act, the Federal Government meets 75% of the capital cost and bears 75% of any operating losses. If similar housing for similar tenants is built under Section 16 of the National Housing Act by non-profit private societies, the Federal Government makes no contribution beyond advancing money under mortgage at 3½% interest. Some Provinces subsidize the construction of senior citizens' housing through capital grants to private societies. The amount of such assistance varies from Province to Province, but in no case is the assistance given sufficient to reduce rents to the required level, unless either the municipality makes a grant to the society to reduce the burden of local taxes, or the society raises the greater part of its capital from charitable sources. Both of these requirements are serious obstacles to increased building by private societies.

The municipalities can request the senior levels of government to build accommodation for senior citizens under Section 36 of the Act. There is, however, no certainty that the municipalities will take the necessary initiative under this Section and experience since the Act was passed in 1949 suggests that there is little immediate likelihood of their doing so on any important scale.

We recommend, therefore, that subject to Provincial participation and supervision, Federal subsidy also be made available to bona fide non-profit societies building housing for senior citizens.

The Federal Government expends a large sum each year in providing pensions for persons over 70. The value of these pensions is largely nullified if the rents which pensioners have to pay are so high that their remaining income is insufficient to provide for their food and other necessities. With the removal of rent controls in B.C., the following rent increases demanded of pensioners were reported: from \$25 to \$42.50 (widow), from \$21 to \$45 (couple), from \$25 to \$42.50 (widower), from \$17 to \$30 (widow). Any steps taken to increase the supply of low rental housing for this group will at the same time increase the real value of the pension and reduce the pressure of demand for a higher pension.



DR. HENRY MOYSE
CPAC Chairman in P.E.I.

The newly elected Chairman of the Prince Edward Island Division, Dr. Henry Moyse, is a native of P.E.I. and a graduate of the Dalhousie University Medical School. Besides being a busy Medical Doctor, he is a gardening hobbyist and is President of the Provincial Flower Show. For the past three years, Dr. Moyse has also been President of the Summer-side Branch of the CPAC.

MODERATE RENTAL HOUSING

The prolonged period of economic prosperity has enabled an exceptionally high proportion of Canadian families to become home owners. The need, however, for adequate moderate rental housing for families who do not yet possess sufficient capital or income to permit home purchase still remains. Increasing urbanization, and the multiple dwelling living which it entails will create further demands for rental accommodation suitable for families with children. We need to encourage the creation of organizations administered on public utility lines which will build large scale rental housing with the aid of low cost government financing.

The success of housing co-operatives in Europe suggests that this form of organization may also fulfil a useful function in this country. Little progress is likely to be made in this direction, however, without some liberalization of the financial facilities available to housing co-operatives.

Sub-section (b) of Section 16 of the N.H.A., which requires that independent management shall be assured, has hitherto prevented housing co-operatives from qualifying under this section of the Act. A broader interpretation of this Section, permitting the issue of non-voting shares to tenants, might overcome this obstacle, but, in any event, we strongly recommend that the financing facilities available under Section 16 of the

N.H.A. be extended to co-operative housing ownership corporations provided they comply with the basic provisions of this Section of the Act.

With the rapidly growing membership of the Credit Unions and their increasing financial strength, the organization of limited dividend housing corporations sponsored by these financial agencies offers considerable possibilities for the provision of a continuing supply of moderate rental housing.

FAMILIES IN RECEIPT OF SOCIAL ASSISTANCE

Our Association has previously drawn attention to the desirability of admitting families in receipt of social assistance to public housing projects. The case for a change of policy in this respect has now become still stronger. With the easing in the housing situation, public housing can and should now be increasingly directed to the special requirements of the lowest income groups who are still, in many cases, extremely badly housed. Average rents paid by families in receipt of social allowance in the City of Vancouver are considerably in excess of the minimum rental payable by working families admitted to public housing projects. Yet for these rents they can often only obtain accommodation which jeopardizes their physical and mental well-being. A recent sample study of families of three persons or more in receipt of social allowance in the City of Vancouver, showed that nearly half were living in accommodation which was seriously substandard or overcrowded.

SLUM CLEARANCE

With the increased housing supply and the availability of low rental accommodation in public housing projects, it has now become possible to initiate slum clearance and urban redevelopment projects without creating undue hardship for the tenants of the properties to be demolished. Our Association wishes to draw your Government's attention once again to the advisability of widening the provisions of Section 23 of the N.H.A. in respect to slum clearance grants. As the Act now stands, grants are limited to those areas which are to be redeveloped for residential or public purposes. Cases will often arise, however, where part or all of a potential clearance area can be more suitably developed for commerce or industry than for the above purposes. Owing to the large number of small parcels in individual ownership, or to the high values placed on existing buildings, such areas may be uneconomic to assemble and redevelop, no less for industrial than for residential purposes, and in default of some assistance from the Federal Government, sub-standard housing in such areas is likely to remain in existence indefinitely. We recommend therefore that Federal grants be extended to areas suitable for redevelopment, irrespective of their ultimate use, provided that (1) their existing use is predominantly residential, (2) the bulk of the housing in the area is substandard and, (3) sufficient alternative accommodation is built to rehouse persons displaced.

Montreal Appointment



Roger Gagnon, P.Eng.

Mr. Gagnon was recently appointed as 1st Assistant Director of the City Planning Department of Montreal. His varied training is attested by three degrees: in Arts from Loyola College; Sciences (in Engineering) from the University of Detroit; and Social Sciences from the University of Montreal. Mr. Gagnon is a member of the Corporation of Professional Engineers of the Province of Quebec and of the Town Planning Institute of Canada and is a Director of the Quebec Division of the CPAC.

Proceedings of the ASPO-CPAC Conference, Montreal, September 1955, will be available next spring. Orders must be placed now. Copies are \$4.00 each.

COMMUNITY PLANNING ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

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If you are not a CPAC Member and you wish to receive the Community Planning News, the Community Planning Review and other Members' Publications, return this form to:

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 77 MacLAREN STREET, OTTAWA 4, ONTARIO,

enclosing \$3.00 at par in Ottawa for Active Membership for 12 months from date. Sustaining membership is \$25.00.

OPENINGS IN COMMUNITY PLANNING

THE ALBERTA PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT

requires

**Research Assistant,
Town and Rural Planning Branch,
Department of Municipal Affairs**

Duties: (1) To carry out research of a specialized nature for local authorities or District Planning Commissions in the preparation of general plans and official schemes. (2) To carry out provincial-wide programs of research on various aspects of the physical development of individual centres and regions. (3) Contact local authorities and advise them as to the best methods of planning to meet their particular problems.

Education: Master's degree in Sociology, Geography, Architecture, Engineering, or Economics, with specialization in physical planning.

Experience: Nil, but applicants who have held positions on planning staffs will be given preference.

Salary: \$3,720-\$4,740 per annum, plus cost-of-living bonus which at the present time is approximately \$300 per annum.

Apply in person or in writing to:

**Director of Personnel,
Room 107,
Legislative Building,
Edmonton.**

THE CORPORATION OF THE DISTRICT OF NORTH VANCOUVER

requires

- (1) **Assistant Municipal Planning Officer**
Salary—\$320 to \$400 per month
- (2) **Draughtsman and General Assistant**
Salary—\$230 to \$275 per month

Applicants to submit details of qualifications, experience, and include references.

Applications will be received by:

**F. G. Saunders, Comptroller,
Corporation of the District of North Vancouver,
District Municipal Hall,
171 West Esplanade,
North Vancouver, B.C.
or
P.O. Box 218,
North Vancouver, B.C.**

LOWER MAINLAND REGIONAL PLANNING BOARD OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

requires

Community Planner

Planning training or experience required.
Salary \$360-\$440

Apply:

**Director,
Lower Mainland Regional Planning Board,
624 Columbia Street,
New Westminster, B.C.**

CITY OF VANCOUVER TRAINEE PLANNING ASSISTANT

To be trained to perform a variety of municipal planning work with emphasis on highway locational duties and related traffic problems. Qualifications: Degree in Civil Engineering with allied experience. Must be eligible for professional registration in B.C. Salary: \$353 to \$424 per month. Application forms must be obtained from and returned to the:

**Personnel Director,
Room 206, City Hall, 453 W. 12 Ave.,
Vancouver 10, B.C.**

not later than January 5, 1956.

COMPETITION O-299.

CITY OF VANCOUVER PLANNING ASSISTANT (ARCHITECT)

To perform civic design and general planning duties. Qualifications: Degree in Architecture; must be eligible for professional registration in B.C. Some planning experience desirable. Salary: \$353 to \$424 per month. Application forms must be obtained from and returned to:

**Personnel Director,
Room 206, City Hall, 453 W. 12 Ave.,
Vancouver 10, B.C.**

not later than January 5, 1956.

COMPETITION O-300.

PLANNING AGAINST SMOKE IN B.C.

A Proposed "Air Pollution" By-Law

by Dennis Critoph

Consulting Engineer; President of the Vancouver Branch of the C.P.A.C.

Many people in the Eastern cities may think that the smoke problem in Canada is confined to the heavily industrialized sections of Quebec and Ontario. However, British Columbia at least has its own peculiar smoke problems in certain areas.

In Vancouver there has been an increasing interest in smoke elimination during the last two or three years. This has finally led to the drafting of a new "Air Pollution By-Law".

In the preparation of this draft, the smoke by-laws already in force in the principal cities of the U.S.A. and Canada have been carefully studied and their best clauses have been generally adopted. Vancouver has however certain unique problems of its own for which there has been little or no precedent.

While Vancouver and its environs are not yet heavily industrialized as compared with Toronto and Montreal, there is at times almost as great a smoke emission per unit area; and, due to the low-lying clouds and fogs which shroud the harbour during considerable periods of the winter season, there is an incipient smog condition.

A large proportion of the smoke has for its source the waste burners of the numerous sawmills on the north shore of Burrard Inlet and along the Fraser River. However, apartment houses, hotels, residences, ships in the harbour, railway yards and numerous plants contribute a generous share. As so much of this smoke results from the burning of waste, the argument that smoke, as unconsumed fuel, represents dollars going up the chimney is not always valid. It is therefore somewhat difficult under these conditions to persuade the business man to spend much money voluntarily on smoke elimination. Another handicap to the smoke abatement program is that the

most readily-available fuel in British Columbia is "soft", or bituminous coal, which is apt to emit heavy smoke unless more care is taken in firing than is usually the case. The "hard" coal, which is comparatively smokeless and the compulsory use of which had much to do with the reduction of smoke in Pittsburg, St. Louis and other United States cities, is not procurable except at prohibitive cost.

The prevalence of waste burning mentioned above has given rise to a unique feature of the landscape of the Pacific Northwest—the sawmill waste burner, or incinerator. In a clause of the By-Law, therefore, entitled "Limitations on Emission", a paragraph has been added dealing specifically with the particles emitted from sawmill waste burners. This reads as follows:

"14. No person shall discharge or allow the discharge into the atmosphere of dust, fumes, solid or liquid particles in excess of the following scale:

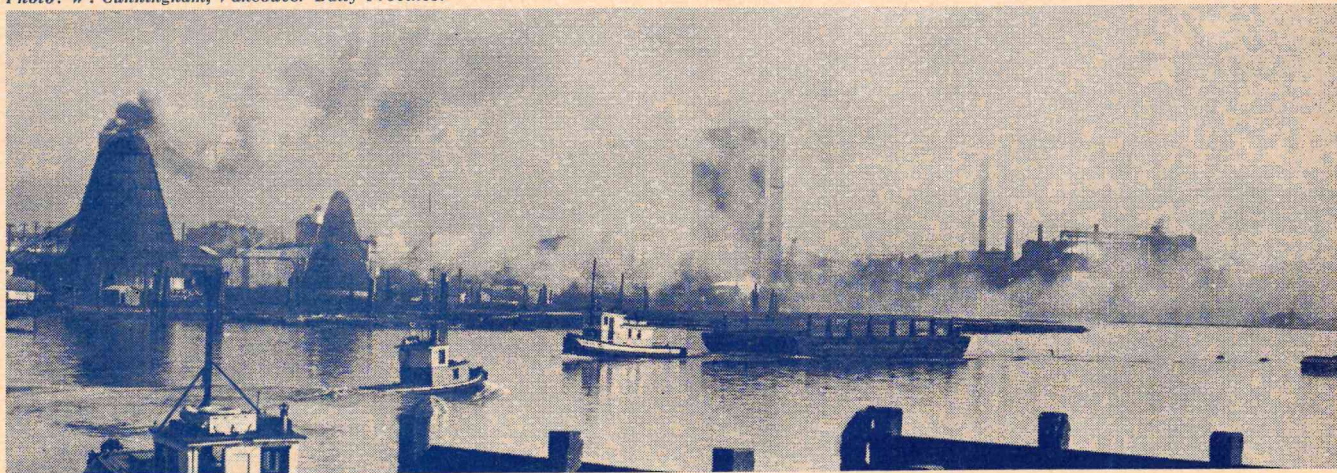
- (1) From flue gases from equipment burning wood—150 grains per 1000 cubic feet at 68 degrees F adjusted to 12% CO₂."

The quantity permitted in other flue gases is 450 grains per 1000 cubic feet, but the weight of these has been assumed to be about three times that of wood smoke particles.

Open fires have been prohibited, and all rubbish is required to be burnt in incinerators designed to the approval of the City Engineer, certain minimum requirements being set out in the section headed "Incinerators". Householders and owners of apartment houses with less than three suites have again been exempted, but it is hoped that C.P.A.C. and similar organizations will attempt some

Photo: W. Cunningham, Vancouver Daily Province.

VANCOUVER



program of education directed to the proper kindling and maintenance of fires.

In order to spearhead the fight against atmospheric pollution in Vancouver, there has been formed a committee of the local branch of the Community Planning Association of Canada, known as the Smoke Committee. This Committee has for its objects the study of all matters relating to smoke emission and the carrying out of public education on this subject. A Klenair Society, subsidized by the City, has also been formed with similar objects. Efforts have been made through the press and radio, with some encouraging results. The problems have also been illustrated with large photographs suitably mounted. An exhibit of such photographs is at present being shown in a shop window in downtown Vancouver.

The campaign is based upon the ground that smoke constitutes a menace to health: (1) by reason of the fact that it screens out the life-giving rays of the sun; (2) by its direct action upon the delicate cells of the human lungs; (3) by the presence of various noxious gases which may always be found in a smoke-infested city; (4) by the effect of the smoke particles upon plant life, robbing the fruits and vegetables exposed to it of much of their vital and nutritive value; and (5) by the impoverishment of the ground which results from the particles of smoke and sulphur compounds being washed into it by rain.

The first three effects, which are the most important, are greatly intensified in the presence of fog—a fact which has been startlingly illustrated in London, Los Angeles, Donora near Pittsburg and in the Meuse Valley in France, in all of which places loss of life and considerable sickness have resulted from this combination now often known as “smog”. Smoke also tends to increase fog conditions. We have felt that greater Vancouver, in the heavily industrialized future which most people agree is in store for it, could easily become a “smog” area such as those mentioned above.

The Cost to Industry and Taxpayers

There is also an economic aspect of the indictment against smoke—the effect of sulphur compounds, in the presence of moisture and smoke particles, upon masonry,

textiles, metals, wool, cotton, leather and works of art—all of which in a few years become disintegrated, corroded or disfigured. It has been estimated that downtown Vancouver spends \$500,000 to \$750,000 yearly in cleaning smoke-blackened buildings. Well over 10,000 tons of dirt fall upon this area every year. It kills the finish of glazed tile, attacks mortar joints and eats away paint. A building should therefore be cleaned every two years. Los Angeles County spends more than \$1,000,000 a year on research and enforcement; Chicago is laying out over \$300,000 for control this year. Smoke abatement officials have a maxim: “Smoke up the chimney is money down the drain”. Even the waste burner at the sawmill may spoil lumber by the deposit of flyash.

The housewife's morale is lowered considerably by the apparent futility of her efforts to keep down grime in the home and on the family laundry, in Vancouver as in other cities; and the telephones of sawmill operators are kept busy at times by irate housewives. In those cities where smoke has been greatly reduced, very considerable savings in laundering alone have been quickly apparent.

A Metropolitan Body is Needed

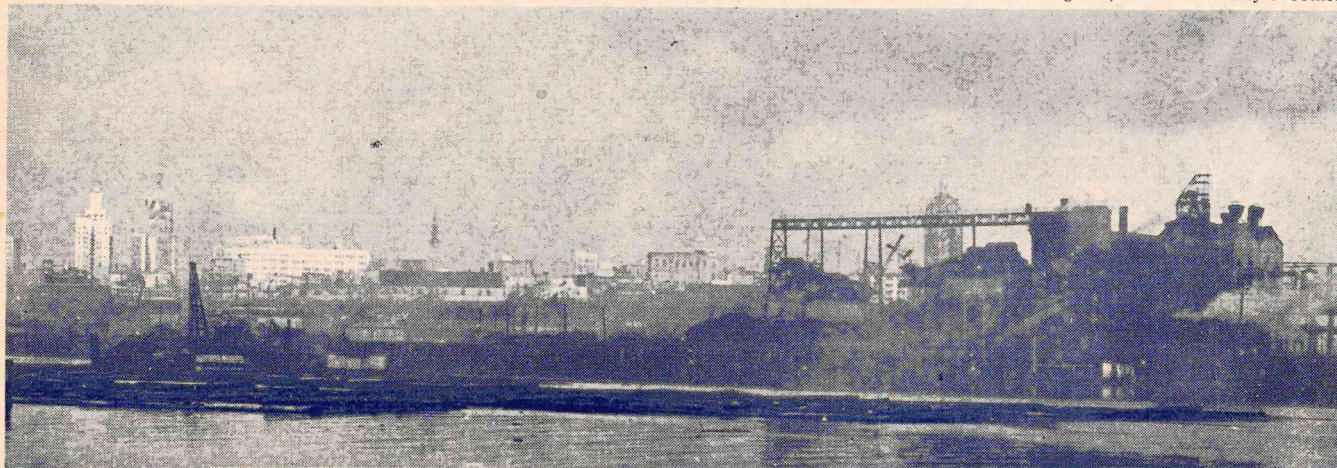
As to our answer to the question: “What do you propose doing about it?”, it is twofold: part relates to legislation and part to education.

As to the former, we press for the formation of a metropolitan body with power to enact and enforce smoke legislation. Many authorities feel that smoke control should be at the Provincial Government level; but in the meantime, so far as Vancouver is concerned, we want to see constructive study of our existing by-law with a view to its improvement and extension. We hope to see the smoke laws enforced not so much in a repressive as in a constructive manner—with direction as to the course to be taken rather than emphasis upon punishment for infraction. There should be emphasis upon the future course of developments; the time to look closely into the layout of a plant from a smoke abatement point of view is while it is still in the design stage.

On the educational side we seek to keep the public informed of current events in the war on smoke; to

VANCOUVER

Photo: W. Cunningham, Vancouver Daily Province.



show the industrialist how much he may improve his public relations by abating this public nuisance; to aim at the training of all those whose work it is to build and to tend fires of all kinds; to make the public smoke-conscious in their domestic heating methods. We also seek to keep the public informed of inventions and schemes which have for their object the economical elimination or abatement of pollution in the air. The qualification "economical" is important because it is obvious that methods which eliminate industry along with the smoke are worthless to an ambitious community such as this. Fortunately economical methods are in existence, and in many cases the savings in fuel cost or the yield of by-products may pay a good interest on the capital value of the equipment.

In short we seek to change the old saying "Muck is money" to "Smoke has no defence".

**A Report on the
International Conference on Regional Planning and
Development
Bedford College, London
September 28th to October 2nd**

On September 28th, some four hundred people from more than forty countries assembled in London for the opening session of a four-day Conference on Regional Planning and Development. They included economists, agriculturists, architects, engineers, educationalists, sociologists and social workers, town planners, political scientists, lawyers, health experts, geographers, administrators and students—and at least one physicist—but all shared a common interest in the problems involved in planning and development schemes conducted on a regional scale.

The Conference was sponsored by nine British and U.S. educational institutions, including the London School of Economics, the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, the University of Liverpool and the University of North Carolina, and was organized by a Preparatory Committee under the Chairmanship of Professor R. J. Gardner-Medwin, head of the School of Architecture at Liverpool University. Many national governments sent official representatives, and representatives also attended from the U.N. which gave financial assistance to the Conference, from the I.L.O., the F.A.O., and U.N.E.S.C.O.; from the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions and the International Federation of Universities; from the American Society of Planning Officials; and from many other organisations.

The primary objective of the Conference was to remedy the present lack of integration in the field of regional planning by setting up a Centre for study, research and the pooling of information. As was pointed out in the Conference program: "Planning failures in the past have resulted from a lack of co-ordination with other fields—that is, the planning was incomplete. These experiences have led to the demand for a more comprehensive approach. . . . The nature of the new approach demands teamwork of specialists in many fields."

The secondary, but perhaps not less important, object of the Conference was to consider some examples of what has been, is being and may be done in the field of regional development, and how these programs were or are being carried out. Consequently, four plenary sessions were

devoted to descriptions and discussions of existing or proposed regional schemes. Of these, one (TVA) is well-known and an established success. Two—the Indian Community Development Project and the Piedmont Plan in northern Italy—are more recent and are not yet fully developed. Both represent, essentially, attempts to reform the social and economic life of large areas, principally by working through and enlisting the support of the peoples of the regions rather than by the imposition of drastic changes from the outside. The fourth scheme—the Volta River Project in West Africa, with which the Aluminum Company of Canada is associated—has not yet started to become a reality; but its aim is the creation of a vast lake and the production of aluminum with the power thus released. Its consequences, it is recognised, will be much more far-reaching than is indicated merely by its immediate object.

Through the descriptions of all four schemes ran three themes which might, indeed, be said to have underlain the entire proceedings of the Conference. These were the need for careful study of all the possible implications of the regional plan—political, economic, social, physical and the rest—before the work of development begins; the need for the full and wholehearted cooperation of experts in many fields in preparing and implementing the plan; and, most important of all, the need to inform the people of the region about the plan and to secure their full and willing co-operation and support—as one delegate put it: to plan "not just for the people, but with the people".

Further discussion of detailed applications and specific aspects of regional planning took place in smaller sessions of twenty or thirty people, at some of which short papers were read on social, medical, financial and other factors. These group sessions provided the opportunity for informal exchanges of views and the establishment of a few general conclusions.

Over the four days of the Conference, it became clear that there was general agreement on the need to facilitate and encourage research, study and exchange of technical information concerning the many different aspects of regional planning; and at the final plenary session the proposal to set up a permanent Centre for these purposes was unanimously endorsed. A Provisional Committee, including most of the members of the Conference Preparatory Committee as well as a number of delegates representing various countries and professions, was elected to draft a constitution for the Centre, to investigate financial resources, to prepare a program and budget, and in due course to call another conference. Immediate tasks delegated to the Provisional Committee included the setting up of a documentation service and a survey of available regional planning services.

Professor Gardner-Medwin was appointed Chairman of the Provisional Committee. Canadians interested in the work of the Committee and in the proposed Centre can communicate with him at the School of Architecture, the University, Liverpool 7, England.

BIRMINGHAM.

NIGEL H. RICHARDSON

MUNICIPAL PLANNING ORGANIZATION

If you are interested in the steps being taken by Canadian towns to initiate sound planning procedures, write for information to CPAC, 77 MacLaren St., Ottawa.

"THE FIRST GOAL OF GOOD COMMUNITY PLANNING"

"... facilitating the smooth working of the urban economy."

Extracts from the address of the Honourable Robert H. Winters, Minister of Public Works, at the Joint Conference of the American Society of Planning Officials and the Community Planning Association of Canada in Montreal, September 26, 1955.

Canada has an urban population of ten million today. This will probably increase to 17½ million in the next twenty years. With allowance for houses destroyed and falling into disuse there would be about two million urban houses built in the country between now and 1975. This growth at today's prices means a prospective investment of \$25 billion in raw land and residential structures alone. Investments of not less than \$2 billion will be required for residential water and sewer mains and frontage roads, to say nothing of the trunk services required and additions to central water and sewage disposal plants. In addition to the housing and the services incidental to it, there are the requirements for schools, churches, hospitals and other institutions. And beyond this again is the private investment in factories, stores, offices and other structures that go to make up the total urban picture.

While this investment prospect would perhaps not be imposing in a country of 160 million, its impact upon Canada will be enormous. Major changes will come over our cities in the next two decades. Decisions will have to be made as to the location of industry within cities, the location and layout of housing areas, design of schools, the routing of roads, the extension of water and sewer services, indeed all those matters that together determine the efficiency and aspect of our cities. There will be more and harder decisions of this kind made in the next twenty years than have been made in the last fifty years of the country's history. The quality of urban growth represents the real challenge of housing in the next twenty years. This is why, being concerned with housing, I am interested in city planning.

This interest of the Federal Government in planning is not of recent origin. Early in the post-war period the Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation as the organization responsible for administering Federal housing policy, contributed to the formation of the Community Planning Association of Canada, and has been helping in its support ever since. Also, in recognition of the great need for people trained in community planning, the Corporation, through a system of grants and bursaries, has assisted Canadian universities to establish and maintain facilities for planning education. In addition the Corporation, in the direct construction of housing projects, has endeavoured to plan them so as to provide worthy examples.

* * *

The size of our cities is determined largely by industrial location, and the site of most industrial growth in Canada is decided by private enterprise. It is true that the location decisions are made in a context of municipal zoning regulations, services, and tax rates. But also con-

tributing to these decisions are many other factors over which local governments have no control,—raw material prices, labour costs, markets, freight rates, road transport costs, and many others. In a system of private enterprise it is unrealistic for planners to contemplate controlling the rate of growth or even the eventual size of their city. They may help to attract industry and may anticipate the impact of growth in whatever form or amount it occurs, but they do not control it.

* * *

... City planning is one large problem that tends to get dealt with in its parts. As I have indicated the term city planning must mean something less than the overall planning of every industry and service in a city. Yet it must mean more than street widening or restrictive zoning. The subject matter for discussion in the next few days covers many items that merit your attention,—metropolitan government or the lack of it, traffic congestion, zoning controls, suburban sprawl, subdivision layout, planning education, visual design of cities, urban renewal, the St. Lawrence Seaway, and the like. But with all these, I think we have only fragments. No single, overall clear purpose is suggested by this compendium.

I recognize of course that you cannot spend your whole time discussing overall objectives, and that in a gathering of experts such as yourselves your discussions must be divided. But suburban development, traffic congestion, and zoning, for example, are so closely related that they are all aspects of the same problem, and none of them is fully intelligible except in relation to the others.

* * *

... City planners are commonly supposed to be concerned more with the city as a way of living than as a way of making a living. It seems to me, however, that the goal of better living will seldom if ever run counter to the goal of economic efficiency. The city must perform its economic function, and the first test of good community planning is whether it contributes effectively to the smooth working of the urban economy. Your profession is not a luxury for the public. It can pay its way and yield large dividends.

A purely functional approach to city planning problems leaves out of account many objectives that city planners as a group are generally believed to cherish. For example, slums are a standing reproach to civilized living and human dignity and should be removed. The land cleared of slums may be used for decent and safe housing. But in some instances that land could more properly be used for other purposes—always accepting that the people whose homes are destroyed must be properly settled.

It is here that the city planner has another contribution to make towards proper public decisions on the best use of land.

Moreover, aesthetic objectives, though obviously important, do not constitute the main purpose of city planning. I do not suggest that pleasing appearance and efficiency have nothing to do with each other. Beauty will always represent a welcome ally of good city planning but never a necessary or sufficient one.

* * *

I hope that private enterprise will carry a large part of the load in the rededication of blighted areas at the centres of our cities. But the redevelopment problem can never be resolved lot by lot and piece by piece. The interest of large investors in central redevelopment can only be reawakened by the prospect of a scale of operation that will change fundamentally the character of large areas. I am not speaking about streets or blocks here, much less parts of them. This is not minor surgery but major operations.

I do not mean to imply that the various governments concerned have no role to play. Planning and the acquisition of land on the scale I have suggested may call for public action. But if redevelopment is more than a salvage operation, if the older parts of our cities have a vital role to play in the whole urban structure, then their redevelopment can properly be made the object of private investment too.

* * *

... I would suggest, in fact, that the greatest single task facing planners today is to make their primary objective clear to the public. The public should be shown that suburban development, traffic congestion, zoning and the like are so closely related that they are all aspects of the same problem, and that none of them is fully intelligible except in relation to the others. In other words, there seems to me to be a great need to draw general attention to a central objective.

This need is reinforced by the fact that there is a body of opinion which considers planning officials a pessimistic clan who foretell disaster for all our cities. You should make it even plainer that the first goal of good community planning is *facilitating* the smooth working of the urban economy—that city planners have the job of adjusting the city to its economic purposes in such a way as to minimize the difficulties faced by its citizens. I know that this functionalist approach is nothing new to you but it has not penetrated sufficiently to the general public. On the contrary, I would suggest that the impression is common that there is something contradictory between the vitality of enterprise and the comfort of citizens.

The result is that perhaps the greatest difficulty Canadian city planners face today is in the mobilization of public opinion to grasp the notion of the city as a whole, so that our municipalities will be supported in the proper use of the powers they have. The great need is not for more powers but for the proper use and co-ordination of existing powers.

Here, then, surely is a situation which challenges organizations like your own—challenges them to get across to the people the crucial part, the integral part planning has to play in this great quarter-century which looms ahead.

I have come now to the end of my remarks. I'm sure that by this time you are well satisfied that I was not at all disingenuous at the outset in warning you that I am not expert in planning. On you, who are expert, rests much of our hope for the urban environment of the future. I would like to close by expressing the hope that, with your continued success, 25 years from now it will seem to laymen that overall city planning has always formed a traditional, uncontentious, and integral part of the workings of our cities and the whole community.

ACTION IN THE U.S.A.

A review of the initial publications of the American Council to Improve Our Neighborhoods, Inc.

Organized in the United States in 1954 as a non-commercial, non-political, non-profit national organization, ACTION (the American Council to Improve Our Neighborhoods) is dedicated to the elimination and prevention of slums. This goal it intends to win in cooperation with the various levels of government and other interested groups.

ACTION's initial publications consist of (1) the *Urban Renewal Research Program*, (2) a summary version of the same report and (3) an *Urban Renewal Bibliography*.

The ACTION program has been organized into three main categories: service, information and research. It is anticipated that the service division will provide direct assistance, chiefly of a technical nature, to municipalities seeking help and guidance with their renewal problems. The information division will collect relevant material to further the aims of the organization. This material will be classified and disseminated to all groups and individuals expressing interest in the work.

The research division will not attempt to involve itself wholly in projects of its own choosing, but rather to anticipate those areas in which research will be required and if possible to arrange for projects and investigations to be carried on by

groups capable of assuming the required work. The present report is the result of an intensive investigation into the problems underlying a program of research which could be undertaken systematically either by ACTION or other research teams anxious to examine the many varied complexities of urban renewal.

The authors of this report, notwithstanding the brief period of time allotted to them, have examined in detail nearly all important aspects of urban renewal, ranging over such wide areas as planning, housing, clearance and administration; and they have organized the material in a manner which enables researchers to relate their own work in this field to the over-all planning of renewal projects.

The main Report, as well as the Summary Report, has been divided into four parts, the first dealing generally with the scope, objectives and policies of urban renewal. The second part is given over to the reference function of the research division of ACTION, while the last two parts outline programs for immediate research and for long-range research respectively.

The first part begins by providing a definition of urban

renewal as "the total of all the public and private actions which must be taken to provide for the continuous sound maintenance and development of the urban area".

The authors aim not only to stimulate private investment in the rebuilding of cities but to remove the economic incentives to retain slums. Among the means suggested to end incentives for slum ownership are the raising of assessments on slum housing and the raising of tax payments to levels of municipal cost borne by other municipal areas.

The short Part II of the Report explains that the research division will furnish factual and advisory materials to ACTION's committees, the executive director and the staffs of the service and public information divisions. It is anticipated that in the first few years of ACTION's operations, the research division will make its greatest contribution to the service division and indirectly to communities through informal advice and, in cooperation with ACTION's library, will provide studies, bibliographies and selected reference lists.

Part III, covering the program for immediate research, suggests that in the early years the research division will become involved in the careful formulation of the policy foundations on which the technical and information services will be based. The success of ACTION, and probably the success of the urban renewal effort in the United States, it is indicated, will hinge on the soundness of those formulations and it is hoped that if these policies and programs are sound and workable their promotion can give to the community concerned a new enthusiasm for cooperating in the continuous renewal and improvement of their urban environment. Therefore in preparing a recommended program of immediate research, only those projects which could be completed within two years are considered. Some of the priority research projects are the following:

- (1) the role of citizen groups in urban renewal;
- (2) basic factors affecting the success or failure of private enterprise efforts to improve blighted areas;
- (3) the economics of rehabilitation of residential structures;
- (4) administrative organization for accomplishing urban renewal;
- (5) financing local public expenditures in urban renewal programs;
- (6) what expansion of the police power concept is necessary?

Altogether fifty topics have been listed for research, some of them designated as urgent and others to be undertaken at a later date.

Part IV deals with the long-range research program and includes projects dealing chiefly with fundamental problems, by which is meant those critical questions affecting the processes of continued change in the urban environment.

One of these long-range research items is the matter of standards. As a basis for this work the researcher is invited to examine such topics as the behaviour and attitudes of the various income groups in respect of housing, to estimate present and future housing needs at the local level, and generally to look at the economic feasibility and desirability of accepted standards in the housing field.

Finally, there are two interesting fields of study outlined with some care: (1) community organization as an agent of urban renewal and (2) economic and social consequences of selected policy decisions in urban renewal.

In justifying the first of these proposed studies, it is pointed out that "the strength and success of conservation and rehabilitation programs may well depend upon the way in which group action by owners and residents is organized and carried out. Motivation must come through non-governmental community efforts as well as municipal actions, and therefore, the nature of the community organization which stimulates and directs this motivation will in large measure determine the results". It is proposed to evaluate the relative success and failure of such organizations in achieving (a) the goal they set for themselves and (b) goals in conformity with

ACTION's view of Urban Renewal". For this purpose, the Report suggests that about 20 to 25 local organizations might be selected "for intensive study"—possibly by "farming out" the studies to Universities and other researchers who would follow a uniform method. The general object would be to find out what kinds of betterment organizations are most useful in furthering urban renewal and how to stimulate their formation.

Under "economic and social consequences" are a number of matters which may not be clearly foreseen or on which major decisions will be made capriciously unless they are studied carefully in advance. Examples of these are:

- (a) decisions concerning *density* of development in redevelopment programs and in conservation and rehabilitation programs;
- (b) decisions concerning the *occupancy* of redevelopment, conservation, rehabilitation and new areas;
- (c) the selection of methods used to *finance* new construction and to encourage conservation and rehabilitation.

In discussing the controversial subject of homogeneity, the Report refers to the fact that groups concerned with financing housing have tended to favour homogeneity as a means of assuring stable values, whereas some social scientists and some city planners have tended to see in homogeneity either fortunate or unfortunate social and economic consequences. Some child welfare workers and psychologists have been alarmed by the effect of a homogeneous community in which women and children, often of a limited age and economic group, are isolated from other people most of the time. Similarly "retirement communities" and homogeneous social groups raise a basic problem.

There is a great challenge to planners and all of their collaborators in the problems which ACTION has defined in these initial publications.

ACTION appears to be an organization financed by voluntary contributions and subscriptions but not with an open membership and membership-voting as in the CPAC. It will be important to observe the progress of this group in organizing the citizen support and the knowledge which are needed to achieve sound urban renewal in the United States.

OTTAWA

DONALD OMAN

EDITOR'S NOTE

The basic research report, reviewed above, was published by the American Council to Improve Our Neighborhoods, Inc. (Box 462, Radio City Station, New York 20, N.Y.) in October 1954, in three volumes:

Urban Renewal Research Program.....	\$10.
Summary of Urban Renewal Research Program	\$ 5.
Urban Renewal Bibliography.....	\$ 5.

ACTION has also published the following mimeographed Research Memoranda:

Voluntary Inspection Program in Norristown, Pennsylvania.

A Ten-Year Investment to Eliminate Blight and Slums. Sources of Aid to Community Development and Improvement Programs.

American Housing. Statistics on Condition, Supply and Demand.

Case Study: Baltimore Housing Court.

Case Study: Baltimore Fight Blight Fund.

Case Study: Quaker "Self-Help" Rehabilitation Program in Philadelphia.

Citizen Organization for Community Development.

Selected Queries to ACTION.

One Hundred Selected References to Problems of Community Development and Improvement.

longuement d'urbanisme, car je sais qu'un expert de mon ministère le fera au cours du congrès, mais je ne peux résister à la tentation de profiter de cette tribune pour revenir sur le sujet.

L'urbanisme est vieux comme le monde et déjà Platon disait dans le *Banquet* que "la plus haute et la plus belle forme de la pensée est celle qui concerne l'ordonnance des cités et de tout établissement". L'urbanisme s'est développé lentement chez nous, mais il intéresse de plus en plus les corps publics et les associations et vous admettez que le ministère que je dirige a fait sa modeste part dans ce domaine. Dans plusieurs mémoires présentés devant la Commission royale d'enquête sur les problèmes constitutionnels, on note le souci du développement de l'urbanisme. C'est ainsi que, vous, messieurs de l'Union des Municipalités, dans votre 34^{ième} recommandation avez proposé "l'établissement d'un plan général d'aménagement pour toute la province et surtout un plan rationnel d'aménagement des territoires municipaux". Vous avez même demandé que le gouvernement fasse l'inventaire des lois et règlements se rapportant directement ou indirectement à des questions d'aménagement en vue de la préparation d'une loi sur l'urbanisme loi dont, selon vous, l'adoption est devenue "urgente".

Vous avez peut-être raison, mais il ne faudrait pas croire qu'il ne s'est rien fait jusqu'ici en matière d'urbanisme dans la province de Québec. On explique parfois le désordre qui règne dans nos villes en affirmant que l'urbanisme coûte cher et que nous manquons d'une législation sur la question. Cette explication ne suffit pas ou du moins, elle me semble une bien piètre excuse pour justifier l'apathie d'un trop grand nombre de citoyens. L'urbanisme est possible dans notre province et en voici quatre exemples concrets.

* * *

4^{ième} EXEMPLE

Il s'agit d'un projet de lotissement résidentiel effectué sur un terrain de quelque 6,000,000 de pieds carrés. Un premier projet de lotissement avait été fait selon les méthodes traditionnelles, c'est-à-dire d'après un plan que les urbanistes appellent un "plan en damier". Le projet comportait 400 lots dont une bonne douzaine se trouvaient inutilisables par suite de leur forme irrégulière.

Par hasard, le propriétaire du terrain rencontra un urbaniste et lui demanda un projet de lotissement pour ce terrain. L'urbaniste accomplit son travail et inutile de vous dire que ce qu'il proposa permit de donner au terrain une allure beaucoup plus belle. Mais laissons de côté l'aspect purement esthétique pour établir uniquement des comparaisons économiques entre le projet de lotissement original et le projet de l'urbaniste.

D'après le premier projet, le coût des services publics réparti sur tous les contribuables, aurait été le suivant: 100,000 verges carrées de pavage à \$2,50 la verge; 29,250 pieds linéaires de tranchées pour l'aqueduc et l'égout à \$2.50 le pied; 29,250 pieds d'égout à un coût minimum moyen de \$2.25 le pied linéaires; 84 trous d'hommes à \$215 la pièce; 29,250 pieds de tuyaux d'aqueduc à un coût minimum de \$3 le pied linéaire; 58 bornes fontaines à \$450 la pièce; 29,250 verges carrées de trottoirs à \$5 la

verge, ce qui aurait voulu dire une dépense totale de \$667,500 pour la municipalité.

Dans le second projet, celui de l'urbaniste, on est arrivé au résultat suivant: 70,000 verges carrées de pavage; 21,200 pieds linéaires de tranchées pour l'aqueduc et l'égout; 21,200 pieds de tuyaux d'égout; 60 trous d'hommes: 21,200 pieds de tuyaux d'aqueduc; 42 bornes fontaines et 21,200 verges carrées de trottoirs. Total: \$478,500. Cela signifie que par les simples conseils d'un urbaniste, non seulement on a rendu les lots plus attrayants et plus pratiques, mais on a réalisé pour la municipalité une économie de \$189,500 pour un projet de lotissement de 400 lots à bâtir. De plus, si on ajoute à cette somme la différence des frais d'intérêt sur les deux emprunts, l'économie déjà réalisée pourrait fort bien doubler.

Voici donc un cas où l'urbanisme s'est montré joliment profitable à la municipalité. Il est d'ailleurs aussi avantageux pour le propriétaire du terrain et pour les futurs habitants et ainsi il enrichit indirectement les municipalités.

Par exemple, dans le cas que je viens de vous signaler, un bref calcul démontre que le prix de vente global des lots sera au moins égal dans les deux cas, avec cet avantage que le deuxième projet, plus attrayant pour l'acheteur de lot, offre de meilleures possibilités de vente. Quant aux futurs habitants, ils bénéficieront d'un million de pieds carrés de parcs mi-boisés comparativement à seulement 150,000 pieds carrés dans le premier projet. Sur ce terrain traversé par un splendide ruisseau, auquel on n'avait prêté nulle attention dans le premier projet, seront construits l'église, l'école et les autres services communautaires. Tous ces avantages auront été obtenus pour une dépense de quelques centaines de dollars d'honoraires payés à un urbaniste professionnel.

Mais, me direz-vous, il s'agit là d'une initiative personnelle. Les pouvoirs publics encouragent-ils l'urbanisme? Aident-ils ceux qui s'en préoccupent? Les municipalités ont-elles les pouvoirs de mettre en vigueur des plans d'urbanisme?

Je crois que oui, mais vous le démontrer serait l'objet d'une autre conférence que j'ai déjà faite ailleurs et qui, ici, serait peut-être un hors-d'œuvre.

Je crois que sans qu'il existe des lois complètes et générales sur l'urbanisme, nos conseils municipaux jouissent quand même de pouvoirs fondamentaux en matière d'urbanisme et je pense que c'est un des domaines où les municipalités, avec l'aide de mon ministère, peuvent jouer un rôle social et économique très important.

Je ne veux pas préciser ce que nous réserve l'avenir dans ce domaine, mais il est sûr que toute législation provinciale sur l'urbanisme devra être basée sur la co-opération des municipalités. Cela veut dire que celles-ci ont devant elles une nouvelle tâche: elle doivent se développer en tenant compte de la beauté et de l'utilisation fonctionnelle des lieux. Comme le disait il ya déjà vingt-cinq ans, un conférencier de la semaine sociale qui en 1929, à Chicoutimi, fut consacrée à la Cité, "dans un pays en plein progrès comme le nôtre, où tout le mal de la croissance sans prévoyance n'est pas encore fait, où le mal déjà fait est encore réparable, mais où tout, mal ou bien, s'accomplit si vite, l'urbanisme est plus qu'une science ou un art, il est une nécessité urgente: si nous savons le vouloir, il pourrait être une vertu nationale".

LE PREMIER OBJECTIF

“Le premier objectif d'un bon programme d'urbanisme est de faciliter le souple fonctionnement de l'économie urbaine . . .”

Extraits d'une allocution prononcée par l'honorable Robert H. Winters devant une réunion conjointe de l'Association d'urbanisme du Canada et de l'American Society of Planning Officials, tenue à Montréal, le 26 septembre, 1955.

La population urbaine du Canada est aujourd'hui de dix millions. Elle atteindra probablement 17½ millions d'ici vingt ans. En tenant compte des maisons détruites et de celles qui tombent en désuétude, on prévoit que d'ici 1975, il se construira environ deux millions d'habitations urbaines au pays. Une telle augmentation, aux prix ayant cours de nos jours, représente des immobilisations futures pour un montant de 25 milliards de dollars aux seules fins d'acquisitions de terrains et de construction d'habitations. Au moins 2 milliards devront être affectés à l'aménagement d'aqueducs, d'égouts collecteurs et de rues en bordures des propriétés, pour ne rien dire des services interurbains et de l'agrandissement des usines de distribution d'eau et de traitement des eaux vannes. En plus des logements et des services qu'ils exigent, il faudra également prévoir l'établissement d'écoles, d'églises, d'hôpitaux et d'autres institutions. Il y a en outre les placements des particuliers dans les usines, magasins, bureaux et autres établissements qui entrent nécessairement dans le tableau d'ensemble de nos villes.

Même si la possibilité de tels placements ne revêt peut-être pas beaucoup d'importance dans un pays de 160 millions d'habitants, elle a, en ce qui concerne le Canada, une portée immense. D'ici 20 ans, nos villes subiront des changements importants. Il faudra s'entendre quant à l'emplacement des industries situées dans leur enceinte, à l'emplacement et à l'aménagement des quartiers d'habitation, aux plans d'écoles, au tracé des routes, au prolongement des canalisations d'eau et d'égouts: il faudra veiller en somme à tous les éléments qui déterminent ensemble la bonne organisation et l'aspect de nos villes. Il nous faudra, au cours des 20 prochaines années, prendre des décisions plus nombreuses et plus graves qu'au cours des 50 dernières années de notre histoire. L'application des règles d'urbanisme à l'expansion de nos villes posera un véritable problème à la construction d'habitations d'ici 20 ans. C'est pourquoi, me préoccupant du logement, je m'intéresse à l'urbanisme.

* * *

. . . L'urbanisme constitue un problème de grande envergure qu'on tend à fractionner. Comme je l'ai indiqué, le mot “urbanisme”, ne saurait s'étendre au plan d'ensemble de toutes les industries et de tous les services d'une ville. Toutefois, il doit comprendre plus que l'élargissement des rues ou l'imposition de zones. La matière à discuter au cours des quelques prochains jours touche bien des points qui méritent votre attention — l'institution ou l'absence d'un gouvernement métropolitain, les embouteillages de la circulation, la réglementation par l'établissement de zones, l'expansion des

banlieues, l'organisation de subdivisions, la vulgarisation de l'urbanisme, les maquettes de villes, la rénovation urbaine, la voie maritime du Saint-Laurent et autres du même genre. Mais tout cela ne constitue que fragments. Cet abrégé ne donne aucunement une claire vue d'ensemble des objectifs prévus.

* * *

J'espère que l'entreprise privée assumera une large part du fardeau que comporte le réaménagement des zones à l'abandon situées au centre de nos grandes villes. Mais le problème du réaménagement ne peut nullement se résoudre terrain par terrain, ni parcelle par parcelle. La perspective de travaux à une échelle qui modifiera fondamentalement le caractère de vastes régions peut seule réveiller l'intérêt de gros capitalistes au sujet du réaménagement du centre des villes. Je ne parle pas en ce cas de rues, ni de pâtés de maisons, encore moins de parties de rue ou de pâté de maison. Il n'est pas question de petite chirurgie, mais d'opérations majeures.

Je ne veux pas donner à entendre que les divers gouvernements n'ont aucun rôle à jouer. L'urbanisme et l'acquisition de terrains à l'échelle que j'ai mentionnée peuvent exiger l'intervention de l'Etat. Mais si le réaménagement est plus qu'un travail de récupération, si les vieux quartiers de nos grandes villes ont un rôle essentiel à jouer dans l'ensemble de l'économie urbaine, ce réaménagement peut à juste titre devenir l'objet des placements privés également.

* * *

Bref, alors que le Canada doit prendre de grandes décisions dans le domaine de l'urbanisme, une bonne partie du public s'y montre indifférent en tant que facteur important au milieu de notre 20^e siècle.

En vérité, j'irais jusqu'à dire que, singulièrement, la tâche la plus importante qui s'impose aujourd'hui à nos urbanistes, c'est de faire connaître clairement au public quel est leur principal objectif. Le public doit comprendre que l'extension des banlieues, l'embouteillage de la circulation, le zonage et autres problèmes du même genre se tiennent étroitement puisqu'il s'agit seulement de différents aspects du même problème et qu'aucun de ces aspects n'est parfaitement compréhensible, détaché des autres. Autrement dit, il y a grandement lieu, à mon sens, d'appeler l'attention générale sur un objectif central.

Ajoutons encore, à cette nécessité, le fait qu'un secteur de l'opinion publique ne voit dans les préposés à l'urbanisme qu'un clan de pessimistes qui n'augurent que des calamités pour toutes nos villes. Il faudrait établir avec plus de précision encore que le premier objectif d'un bon programme d'urbanisme est de *faciliter* le souple fonctionnement de l'économie urbaine, et que les urbanistes ont pour tâche d'adapter l'organisation urbaine à ses objectifs économiques, de manière à atténuer les inconvénients dont souffrent ses citoyens.

NOUVELLES *d'Urbanisme*

Finances Municipales et Urbanisme

**Extrait du discours de l'honorable Yves Prévost,
ministre des Affaires municipales au congrès
annuel de l'Union des Municipalités de la province
de Québec.**

. . . Il existe d'autres façons d'augmenter les revenus: il existe évidemment d'autres impôts que l'impôt immobilier; mais, avant de vous en parler, je crois que je ne ferai pas un hors-d'œuvre en vous entretenant pendant quelques minutes de deux façons, bien indirectes à première vue, mais réelles, d'augmenter les revenus municipaux ou de diminuer les dépenses, ce qui, en définitive, revient au même.

Il y a d'abord l'urbanisme. Depuis que je suis ministre des Affaires municipales, j'ai parlé à maintes reprises de l'urbanisme qui, à l'heure actuelle, me semble non seulement un des problèmes sociaux des plus importants des municipalités, mais peut devenir aussi, j'espère vous le prouver dans un instant, une source de revenus, en même temps qu'une source d'économie. Je ne veux pas traiter

(Voir page deux)



L'honorable Yves Prévost
Ministre des Affaires municipales de la
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Community Planning NEWS

(See verso)

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